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      UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
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      SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK
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      MANORHAVEN CAPITAL LLC, f/k/a
      BENGAL PARTNERS LLC,
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                      Plaintiff,
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                                               16 CV 0569 (PKC)
                 v.
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      MATTHEW HEISSAN, et al.,
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                     Defendants.
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                                                New York, N.Y.
                                                January 26, 2016
10
                                                3:08 p.m.
      Before:
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                            HON. P. KEVIN CASTEL,
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                                                District Judge
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                                 APPEARANCES
15
      GUSRAE KAPLAN NUSBAUM PLLC
           Attorneys for Plaintiff
      BY: MARTIN H. KAPLAN
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           J. CHRISTOPHER ALBANESE
17
      BRUCE ELSTEIN (By Telephone)
      NICOLE BARBER (By Telephone)
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           Attorneys for Defendants
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      ALSO PRESENT: MATTHEW HEISSAN (By Telephone)
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1 (In the robing room) THE COURT: Good afternoon. This is Judge Castel. 2 3 We're on the record in my robing room. 4 And for the plaintiff I have? 5 MR. KAPLAN: Martin H. Kaplan, Gusrae Kaplan Nusbaum 6 PLLC. With me to my left is my associate Christopher Albanese. 7 THE COURT: Thank you both very much. 8 And on the line, I take it, is Bruce Elstein and 9 Matthew Heissan. Is that correct? 10 MR. ELSTEIN: That's correct. 11 MR. HEISSAN: Matthew Heissan, yes. 12 THE COURT: Thank you very much. 13 MR. ELSTEIN: In addition, there's Nicole Barber, an 14 attorney at Goldman Gruder & Woods. 15 THE COURT: Good afternoon to you as well. 16 MS. BARBER: Good afternoon, your Honor. 17 THE COURT: So I have the application for a temporary 18 restraining order and preliminary injunction, as well as an affidavit in support, a memorandum. I have the Marins 19 20 affidavit and also the Kaplan affidavit. And the affidavit lays out the scenario that on something on the order of seven 21

occasions after Stronghold ceased working for the plaintiff, it accessed the electronic communication system of Manorhaven Capital. And certainly under 18 U.S.C. 2701, the intentional access either without authorization or in excess of

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authorization is a violation of the federal statute.

Do you deny, do you, Stronghold, deny, and you, Mr. Heissan, deny that you accessed the system on seven occasions after April 2015?

MS. BARBER: Your Honor, this is Nicole Barber from Goldman Gruder & Woods. On behalf of all the defendants, we don't want to take the risk of waiving this right, so I'd like to make an oral motion to dismiss pursuant to 12(b)(3). I don't believe that this Court has venue to hear this matter at this time.

THE COURT: All right. Well, tell me about it. Why is venue improper?

MS. BARBER: Your Honor, it requires a substantial amount of the alleged activity to have occurred in New York, and a review of the complaint that has been filed would reveal that none of the actions took place in New York.

THE COURT: Well, I'm not sure that's what the venue provision stands for in the case of a defendant corporation.

Now, it seems to me that venue may be proper where the party may be found. Is Stronghold found in this district?

MS. BARBER: No, your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay. So let me hear the plaintiffs on venue.

MR. KAPLAN: The plaintiff Manorhaven has its office in New York City and has had its office in Manhattan prior to

some of the invasions into the electronic communications by Stronghold and Mr. Heissan.

THE COURT: Well, that can't be correct because I just had a lawyer represent to me that they're not present in this district. Isn't that correct, Ms. Barber?

MS. BARBER: That's correct, your Honor.

THE COURT: So it's untrue that you have an office in this district.

MR. KAPLAN: That's not what I meant, your Honor. I meant the plaintiffs have an office in this district where they maintain their system and where the system was invaded in Manorhaven was in New York when the system was invaded. So therefore venue --

THE COURT: The system that was invaded was physically situated in your New York office?

MR. KAPLAN: That is correct, because there's a connection from there to the Smarsh vendor. And that's what empowers it, the relationship between in this case Manorhaven, formerly known as Bengal, and Smarsh. Wherever Bengal or Manorhaven is, where their computer system is, that's where it exists. And that was in Manhattan at 120 Wall Street and has been that way since approximately May 1 of 2015.

THE COURT: All right. What do you say in response to that?

MS. BARBER: Your Honor, I can't speak to where a

cloud system is said to reside, but Smarsh Inc. is an Oregon entity, and all of the actions alleged to have been taken by all of the defendants occurred either in his New York office -- I'm sorry -- his Connecticut office or his Connecticut residence, or in the case of Attorney Elstein, in a connected courtroom. Nothing here has occurred in New York, and arguably Smarsh is located in Oregon.

THE COURT: Let's see whether I can unpack all of this.

These electronic communications, are they documents or are they emails or both?

MR. KAPLAN: They're both in electronic format.

THE COURT: They're both emails and documents.

MR. KAPLAN: Correct. In electronic format, meaning it's electronically stored.

THE COURT: And where were they created?

MR. KAPLAN: Some were created in New York, and some were created elsewhere.

THE COURT: And where are they stored?

MR. KAPLAN: They're stored at Manorhaven where their server is. And there's a relationship from that server to Smarsh, which essentially becomes the depository, the vendor that allows for the retention in WORM form as required by the regulations and allows for searching of that through the Smarsh/Manorhaven connection.

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THE COURT: So they are on your server and they are 1 also in a cloud type arrangement? 2 3 MR. KAPLAN: I don't know if it's cloud. It may be 4 hard. But it's in a location under the control of Smarsh. 5 And, honestly, I don't know where Smarsh is specifically. I 6 think they have offices all over the country. 7 THE COURT: All right. And maybe you want to tell me on this venue motion, where did your client, if your client did 8 9 access this data, where was the data stored that it accessed? 10 MS. BARBER: Your Honor, again, my understanding of 11 how these things are stored is that they're in a cloud type 12 facility. 13 THE COURT: That's not what I asked you. 14 MS. BARBER: And my client accessed them from Connecticut. 15 THE COURT: From Connecticut. But what did he access, 16 17 do you know what he accessed? 18 MS. BARBER: The cloud through his computer. 19 THE COURT: He accessed the cloud through his 20 computer. 21 MS. BARBER: Smarsh program, yes, who has a principal 22 place of business in Oregon, through his own personal computer 23 located in Connecticut. 24 THE COURT: All right. Okay. And Manorhaven was in

privity of contract with is it Smarsh?

MR. KAPLAN: Smarsh.

THE COURT: I conclude preliminarily at this stage that Manorhaven has alleged that it controlled from New York these electronic communications and their storage and, hence, at this very preliminary stage, it appears that a substantial part of the events giving rise to the claim occurred within this district. So without prejudice to your renewal on a more fulsome record, I'm denying your venue motion.

MS. BARBER: Thank you, your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay. So tell me what your clients did.

MS. BARBER: Well, your Honor, before this motion, I haven't spoken at any length with our clients. And I'm not sure that it's best to question him in this particular setting.

My understanding is that he was never told either verbally or in writing that he could not access the program. He helped create and set up the entire program. In addition, after he was terminated -- sorry. Before he was terminated -- I'm sorry. That's right. It was an entity and they parted ways and he helped them wind down and change their domain name and he had access to do those kind of things. There was never any restriction put on him either verbally or in writing. And, in fact, he was asked to access the system to do certain things like wind down and change the domain.

THE COURT: Okay. Let me hear from the plaintiff.

MR. KAPLAN: Your Honor, in fact, what counsel has

told you is not accurate. His access was limited only for certain purposes, and he was not supposed to do general searches. In fact, he was only allowed access for ad hoc IT matters. And, in fact, Smarsh did not charge for his access, because they usually charge by user, because he was not someone who would be searching and doing the things that the Smarsh system allows for. It's only an IT connection.

And, certainly, under all circumstances, Judge, there's a letter in April, the latter part of April, from counsel for Mr. Heissan which says the relationship is over. You owe us enormous amount of money for nine years and one month of services at \$2,000 a month and your demand is made to pay.

Certainly, prior to that, at that date, everything was ended. Even if you were to argue that he had some type of authorization at some point in time, thereafter, he invaded the system on a number of occasions and took out hundreds of electronic communications. It's black and white proveable. We've put as attachments to the exhibits the logs that Smarsh maintains to show who searched, when they searched, and somewhat what they took.

I'm sorry, Judge. The logs are 2 inches thick. We didn't put them in. We certainly have them. And the affidavits set forth -- I apologize, I misspoke, your Honor. We originally intended to burden you with some more paper and

be ecological terrorists. But the punch line was we didn't do that. But we have it, it's clear, and there's no question this happened on events that are after April 23.

THE COURT: April 23, 2015.

MR. KAPLAN: Correct, your Honor.

THE COURT: And that's when you maintain the relationship ended.

MR. KAPLAN: I maintain Mr. Heissan never had any authority to do this. But giving him the benefit of the doubt, on April 23 there can be no question that from that date forward, it was black and white to everyone, including Mr. Heissan, that his relationship with Manorhaven/Bengal had ended.

THE COURT: All right. Let me hear from the defendant.

MR. KAPLAN: Your Honor, if I just may one moment. I apologize. There's a third affidavit you didn't mention when you began the record. It's an affidavit from Mr. John Keating. Mr. Keating is the former CEO of Bengal and he was the CEO through the time that Mr. Marins became the managing member and he put in an affidavit. I have another copy if you need it, Judge.

MR. ALBANESE: It should be one of the last documents, your Honor, in the package.

THE COURT: I have it now. Thank you.

MR. KAPLAN: And as is evident from that, it clearly recites that Mr. Heissan never had full authority to use the system and further recites the details relating to the services performed. And, for the record, I firmly disagree with counsel's description of what he did in connection with Smarsh, he being Mr. Heissan and Stronghold, did in connection with Smarsh. Accordingly, I think giving every benefit of the doubt to the defendants, from April 23 on, every one of those invasions of the platform and the taking of electronic communications violated 18 U.S.C. 2707.

THE COURT: All right. Let me take it for the period prior to April 23, and I realize that that stands on a different footing. What was the nature of the authorization that the defendants had prior to April 23, for what purposes were they authorized to access the system?

MR. KAPLAN: The system -- Stronghold was authorized to go into the system because periodically there are technological glitches -- I'm not sufficiently sophisticated in computers to describe exactly what they are -- and they need to be remedied, like a mechanic fixing an engine, and that's what he was authorized to do. But I think it's incredibly significant, Judge, that for 500 days prior to the April invasions of the system, there was no entry by Mr. Heissan into the system 500 days prior to that. So it demonstrates clearly, certainly --

THE COURT: Why do you pick 500 days? What is the significance of 500 days?

MR. KAPLAN: That's as far back as we counted. That's how far back the system goes. The system doesn't go beyond 500 days. Maybe it's 2,000 or 3,000 days; I don't know. That doesn't mean, honestly, your Honor, that we won't be able get that information ultimately, but you can't get it just by going into the system and requesting information.

THE COURT: All right. Does the defendant claim lawful ownership of the downloaded documents?

MS. BARBER: Your Honor, I think that's a different question than lawful access.

THE COURT: Why don't you answer my question.

MS. BARBER: I think he rightfully has possession of them. He had access. He had permissible access to the system. He had carte blanche access to the system. He created it.

THE COURT: There's no dispute here he had access to the system. That's why we're having this conversation in this proceeding this afternoon. That's beyond dispute here. He had access to the system. No one is contesting that.

MS. BARBER: And it was authorized, your Honor. There were never any restrictions put on his access.

THE COURT: All right. And you maintain that, for example, today, he has the lawful right to go into the system and download any documents he chooses today. Correct?

MS. BARBER: Your Honor, arguably this particular complaint would be notice to him that the plaintiff no longer gives him authorized access. But until this was received by him this afternoon, approximately an hour or an hour and a half ago, yes.

THE COURT: Okay. So up until an hour and a half ago, he had the lawful right to go into the Manorhaven system and download at will any document he chose to. That's your position, correct?

MS. BARBER: He had been authorized to do so and there had never been a restriction on his access.

THE COURT: All right.

MS. BARBER: They actually asked him to access the system on particular occasions, which he can attest to if we are permitted time to respond.

THE COURT: You want to give me the last date of such a circumstance?

MR. ELSTEIN: I don't know the exact date, your Honor. It was when they requested that he assist in the transfer of the domain from Bengal Partners to Manorhaven. It was a name change.

THE COURT: Give me an idea. Was it last week?

MR. ELSTEIN: No.

THE COURT: Was it last month?

MR. ELSTEIN: Maybe our client can give us an idea.

1	THE COURT: Was it two months ago?
2	MR. ELSTEIN: Matthew, can you chime in when it
3	approximately was?
4	MR. HEISSAN: Approximately two three. The profile
5	update for the domain registration was approximately two three
6	of 2015.
7	THE COURT: What does two three of 2015 mean,
8	February 3?
9	MR. HEISSAN: I apologize. Quarter three. Sometime
10	in the third quarter of 2015. I apologize.
11	THE COURT: Are they on a calendar fiscal year or are
12	they on a non-calendar fiscal year, Mr. Heissan?
13	MR. HEISSAN: Sometime in July, August, or September
14	of 2015, that email. I just don't have it in front of me, your
15	Honor. I apologize.
16	THE COURT: And you don't have a recollection.
17	MR. HEISSAN: It's one of those three months. I just
18	know Zachery Marin emailed me from Manorhaven.
19	THE COURT: Mr. Heissan, what's the nature of your
20	business?
21	MR. HEISSAN: I do IT consulting and support.
22	THE COURT: And what kind of work did you do for
23	Manorhaven?
24	MR. HEISSAN: I believe Manorhaven is Bengal Partners.
25	In back in May of 2015, Smarsh sent me an email about the

merger with Manorhaven. Given I am one of their main contacts for the company --

THE COURT: We're not understanding you. You have to speak clearly. We did not hear what you just said.

MR. HEISSAN: I apologize. Smarsh, back in 5/19/2015, so after that April 23 date that the gentleman sitting with you, Mr. Kaplan, stated, I have an email from Smarsh saying that I am listed as an authorized user for Bengal Partners and they talk about the merger with Manorhaven and that I'm continued to have access to it. I never once was told by — and Zachery Marins from Manorhaven emailed me a number of times many months past that as well, and no one ever once told me I never had access to — that I shouldn't have access to those parts.

THE COURT: This case is not about access. It's about authorization. There's no question here that prior, well, right up to the moment the defendants have access. There's no dispute about that. They may have access right now.

MR. KAPLAN: They don't. It's been cut off, Judge.

THE COURT: But up until very recently -- when was it cut off?

MR. KAPLAN: About a week ago.

THE COURT: Okay. They had access. The question is whether they had authorization. That's the question.

MR. HEISSAN: Smarsh states in an email, and I can

forward it to you, says I have you, meaning me, listed as an authorized user for Bengal Partners. It talks about the merger with Manorhaven Partners. That's past the April 23 or 5th date that Mr. Kaplan mentioned.

THE COURT: All right. Who can tell me generically the nature of the documents that were downloaded from the Manorhaven system.

MR. KAPLAN: Well.

THE COURT: Your colleague is eagerly.

MR. KAPLAN: He knows better than I do.

MR. ALBANESE: I was the one who manually did the search, your Honor, and I reviewed some of the activity of Mr. Heissan, all of the activity of Mr. Heissan after April 20. I did, just so you know, I did a search of Mr. Heissan's email address within the system, and there were less than a thousand emails related directly to and from Mr. Heissan going back years.

Mr. Heissan downloaded over 50,000 emails containing documents above and well beyond anything that Mr. Heissan sent or received, including attorney-client privileged information and client information that's protected on regulation SP.

THE COURT: What do you mean by client information? Be more specific.

MR. ALBANESE: Bengal Partners is a broker dealer. It has public clients in the financial industry, and they trade

basically for those clients. Under regulation SP, the client information is sacrosanct. It's protected by the firm.

THE COURT: And how do you know it was downloaded by the defendants?

MR. ALBANESE: The logs from Smarsh tell us so.

THE COURT: And information on approximately how many customers?

MR. ALBANESE: I have not done a direct analysis of --

THE COURT: Was it one?

MR. ALBANESE: No, it was many because I don't -- I have not been able to do an analysis of each of the 50,000 emails because there were so many.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. ALBANESE: Now, just in furtherance of that, in follow up to what Mr. Kaplan had said, there was no activity, Mr. Heissan has never downloaded emails for himself. He never reviewed emails. That was not part of his -- and that's what Mr. Keating's affidavit goes to say. This is well above and beyond anything that he was authorized to do during his work with Bengal Partners.

THE COURT: Okay. All right. Anything else the defendants wish to say?

MR. HEISSAN: Your Honor, I downloaded emails all the time from all of the users. Just so you know, I paid for the domain and the hostings. You cannot have emails without the

hosting and the domain registration and I paid for that for at least seven to nine years myself and was never reimbursed for that. I'm the one who created the emails. I downloaded emails constantly. Servers, the emails I have access to in storage because I do work for Bengal Partners, now Manorhaven

Partners — and he was supposed to get back in contact with me and has yet to do so. So I still have work for Bengal Partners or Manorhaven.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. ALBANESE: Your Honor.

MR. ELSTEIN: Your Honor, I have something to add.

THE COURT: Go ahead.

MR. ELSTEIN: Bruce Elstein. We heard Mr. Albanese talk about emails to the system. But with all due respect, it's access to records that are maintained by Smarsh. And the importance of it is, as I understand it, that we can discern what was search results versus what was downloaded. And without knowing that information, I don't think Mr. Albanese has the qualification to distinguish between those two. If a search was made and results were indicated, I think he's counting all of those as a download, when in fact if we would have direct proof of Smarsh, I think that would prove exactly to the contrary.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. ALBANESE: Your Honor, he's a hundred percent

wrong on that. There are logs that explicitly state both the searches on one hand and the downloads on the other and we do have hard proof from Smarsh of each instance, excuse me, 35 instances of downloads by Mr. Heissan that total over 50,000 emails, separate and distinctive from the searches and each — if you want to talk point of access that Mr. Heissan did, there were over 8,000 points of access.

THE COURT: I don't know what that means.

MR. ALBANESE: That means every time Mr. Heissan did a key stroke or did a search on a function within the system, it recorded it. And there were over 8,000 instances where Mr. Heissan utilized the Smarsh system.

MR. KAPLAN: If I may, your Honor, that's sort of like a refined search as you go through on Westlaw and you start narrowing your principles of law, it's the same thing here as you go in and give different commands to narrow and identify additional documents from your earlier search.

THE COURT: Anything else from the defendant?

MS. BARBER: No, your Honor.

MR. HEISSAN: Just that I had done downloads for John Keating in April and accessed all of his emails and I downloaded them and distributed them for him. He knows that I do this. He knows I'm the one that creates all the email addresses and gives them to users. I'm the one who has complete access to all of them. I have more access than John

Keating, the president and CEO, for all of the nine and a half years for all this data. I had unrestricted access.

THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.

All right. That appears to conclude everything that I need. I'm now prepared to rule.

Under 18 U.S.C. Section 2701, it is a crime to either, one, intentionally access without authorization a facility through which an electronic communication service is provided, or intentionally exceed an authorization to access that facility where the person thereby obtains, alters, or prevents authorized access to a wire or electronic communication while it is in a storage in such system.

18 U.S.C. 2707 provides for a civil action that may be brought, including for, under subdivision B, for preliminary and other equitable relief as appropriate.

Here it is acknowledged by both sides that up until very recently, the defendants, and specifically Matthew
Heissan, had access to a facility which stored electronic communications of Manorhaven. That is not the issue in this proceeding, whether he had access. We wouldn't be here if he didn't have access. He indeed did. The question is whether he either intentionally accessed without authorization or he intentionally exceeded an authorization to access the facility.

Here at the temporary restraining order phase, the plaintiff has demonstrated that Mr. Heissan and Stronghold

Media were engaged for the purposes of rendering IT services. The services that were to be performed included repairing and upgrading and facilitating the electronic data system utilized by Manorhaven. It included, according to Mr. Heissan, the creation of email accounts and addresses. And Mr. Heissan readily acknowledges and there is no dispute that, at least at the TRO stage, that he was responsible for creating the system or at least upgrading it and maintaining parts of it in his capacity as an IT vendor.

That, however, is not authorization to download business information of the plaintiff. The representation that has been made before me and which has gone unchallenged is that customer information of the plaintiffs, a broker dealer, was downloaded by the defendants. And such downloading for a purpose unrelated to the maintenance or IT services rendered is the exceeding of authorization.

I find that without a temporary restraining order, the plaintiff and the plaintiff's customers are likely to suffer irreparable injury. The probability of success on the merits has been demonstrated. Money damages are not an adequate remedy for the danger of further dissemination of information from this facility. And, accordingly, I'm granting the TRO in full.

And I'm requiring that a bond in the amount of \$5,000 be posted by February 2 at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. And

that service of this order be by tomorrow and then it can be by electronic service.

I'm setting the date for the preliminary injunction hearing for February 3 at 11 a.m.

And I'm marking this order as entered as of 3:44 p.m. Thank you all very much.

MR. ELSTEIN: Your Honor, I have one point of clarification.

THE COURT: Yes, sir.

MR. ELSTEIN: Are you signing the order that was the draft of which was provided to us unsigned, is that the order that you're signing?

THE COURT: It is except it's been modified to include information about the date and time of the preliminary injunction hearing, the date for posting a bond, the amount of the bond, and the time of service of this order.

MR. ELSTEIN: May I just ask for one point of clarification. In the second ordered paragraph --

THE COURT: Yes.

MR. ELSTEIN: -- the unrestricted with date, and we talked about dates here being before and after from a date. I didn't hear your Honor clarify that point at all.

THE COURT: I don't know what you mean by clarify that point. There is no date restriction in my order.

MR. ELSTEIN: Right. But we talked about there being

a difference and I think the papers talked about there being a difference before April 23, arguably, and after. Is the order silent in that regard?

THE COURT: The order is most emphatically silent because the basis of my ruling is that even if every one of the documents were downloaded and could be proven to have been downloaded in March of 2015, it would violate the statute because I found preliminarily at the temporary restraining order that it's in excess of the defendants' authorization.

Anything further from the plaintiff?

MR. KAPLAN: No, your Honor.

THE COURT: Anything further from the defendant?

MR. ELSTEIN: No, your Honor.

THE COURT: Thank you very much.